

Reports about single-person households

YSI - Norway - Country case 2

1. Aleneboendes levekår (2006)

Basics: Who ordered and who carried it out? Why was the study commissioned?

- *Why was the original idea about a white paper discarded?*

Does the report include any recommendations on how to advance the situation of people living in single-person households (generally or a some sub-group, for example young people mentioned in the country report)?

- *If so, how viable / executable are the recommendations from a policy perspective?*

Impact of the research

- *How was it received? Did it have public / nation wide coverage?*
- *Did it lead to any actions?*
- *Did it lead to any additional research?*

The report does not include any policy recommendations. The publication describes and analyze central statistics on living conditions for people living alone. It is commissioned and financed by the Ministry of Children and Equality and published by the SSB, which is the national statistical institute of Norway, and the main producer of official statistics.

The purpose of the publication was to highlight important areas of everyday life of people living alone, by presenting demographics, living conditions, income, wealth, consumption, social participation and participation in organizations, loneliness, labor participation and health. The publication draws on numerous statistical material and several surveys carried out by SSB.

Regarding impact of research, we have been in contact with Eilev Mørk, who at the time was responsible for coordinating the work with the report as well as contributing as an author. He pointed out that it was published 11 years ago and that he unfortunately had no recollection of how it was received or if it led to any action. He further remarks that there was probably no significant political or public attention in relation to the publication.

2. Meld. St. 24 Familien – ansvar, frihet og valgmuligheter

Country report mentions that the single-person households were also part of this family-oriented study.

Basics: Who ordered and who carried it out? Why was the study commissioned?

- *What is the role of single-person households in this study and why were they included?*

What recommendations does the report give for advancing the situation of those living in single-person households?

- *Especially interesting are the recommendations for the public sector*
- *The country report mentions at least “municipality taxes related to housing as a possible area of improvement.” Please elaborate on this. How is this planned to work exactly? Are there any further plans to deal with this issue on governmental/municipal level?*
- *Other recommendations?*

Impact of the research

- *How was it received? Did it have public coverage?*
- *Did it lead to any actions?*
- *Did it lead to any additional research?*

As mentioned in the country report single households were devoted some attention in a separate section in the recent white paper on families, where it is mentioned that measures can be taken to reduce public taxes for single households, but no specific plans or strategies are mentioned (Meld. St 24)[1]. It is important to point out that the document was an official government white paper commissioned by the Ministry of Children and Equality on a broad specter of the ministry’s sectorial responsibility area. In Norway a government white paper is typically a broad-based document where the government informs the parliament on a ministry’s policy field, often suggesting new politics without being tied up to concrete legislative proposals. It is never any authors credited and are usually carried out by the ministry and its employees itself.

In terms of why the paper was commissioned, the introduction to the paper states that the main reason for writing up the paper was that it was 13 years since the last white paper on families and that new type of challenges needed to be addressed. The main topics concerns:

- Parenthood, Children and child upbringing
- Flexibility in family policy measures
- Measures to improve the conditions of low-income families
- Efforts to combat violence in families
- Strengthening the family counseling services

The role of single-person households in the white paper is quite peripheral, this can be illustrated by the fact that out of 195 pages, one and a half pages concerned single person households. But the topic was for the first time specifically included in a white paper (Ensliges landsforbund).

Regarding the impact the white paper may have had, we have not been able to obtain any information that it led to specific actions on the policy field of people living alone. Information obtained from the interview with Ensliges Landsforbund point out that no policy changes have been made, in conclusion the white paper had little impact on policies and measures aimed towards people living alone.

3. Sources

Interview with consultant from Ensliges Landsforbund. 05.10.2017

Meld. St. 24 (2015–2016) Familien – ansvar, frihet og valgmuligheter

Mørk Eilev. Phone call made 05.10.17

Mørk Eilev et. al. SSB (2006) Aleneboendes levekår